GREEN INDUSTRIES AND JOBS

- The U.S. and Germany are both strongly committed to leading robust global efforts in mitigating and adapting to ongoing global climate change. Both countries are also actively exploring the means of transforming their economies significantly away from fossil fuels to a greener industrial model.

- Together, Germany and the U.S. are looking for ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in ways that will stimulate recovery from the recession. Economic growth will be fueled by the expansion of employment in areas such as renewable energy generation and energy efficiency, both of which are well-suited to U.S.-German cooperation.

- German expertise and experience in the field complements the commitment of the Obama Administration to invest in clean energy, creating synergies that will spur essential green industry growth and jobs in both economies.

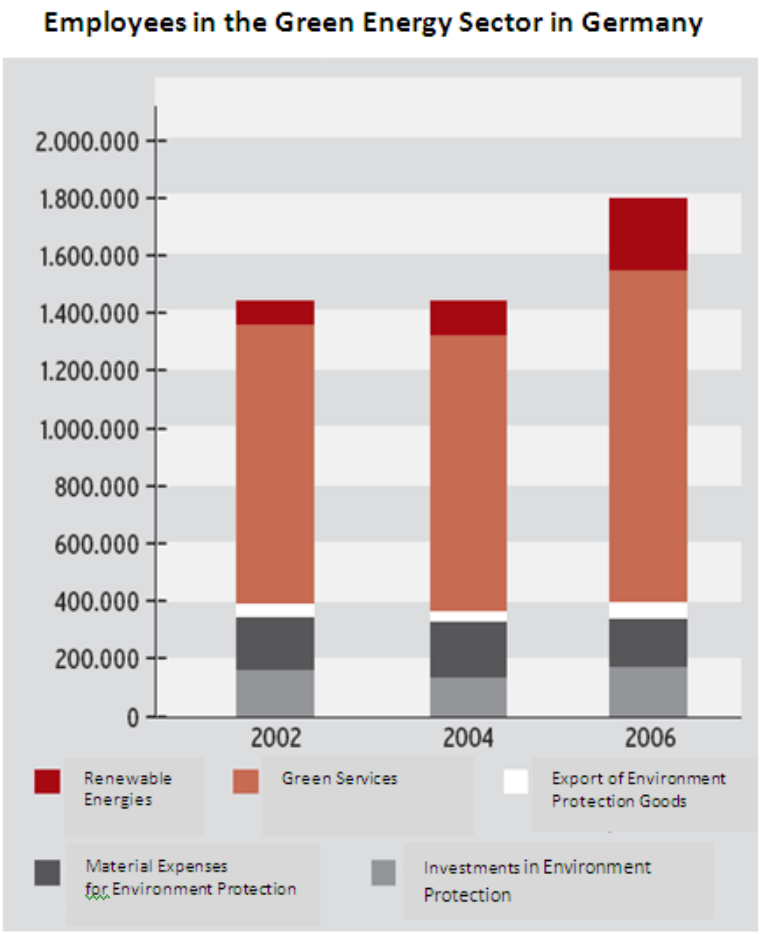
- Germany has long been a leader and innovator in the green sector, and the country's integrated climate and energy policy and renewable energy law have combined to put German green industry a step ahead of the rest of the world.

- German analysts report that the green sector is valued at €69.5 billion and supports 1.8 million jobs. Further growth is expected despite the financial crisis. Employment in renewable energy grew 16% over the last year, and by 2020, the renewable sector is expected to provide more jobs than the auto industry in Germany.

- President Obama has set ambitious goals for the reduction of CO2 emissions and is planning to invest $150 billion over 10 years in a clean energy future. Pending U.S. legislation calls for additional billions in tax cuts for alternate energy, including a multi-year extension of the production tax credit for wind, geothermal, hydro power and bioenergy.

- These measures bode well for the expansion of green industry in both the U.S. and Germany. German-American cooperation in the field of wind and solar energy has already resulted in an estimated $1 billion in cross investment, the implementation of alternative environmental technologies, and the creation of good jobs in both countries.

- The Renewable Energy Federation registered renewable exports from Germany worth six billion euros in 2006 – an increase of 30% compared over the previous year. The U.S. and Germany are also engaged constructively in initiatives to deploy renewable energy technology, such as through the recently established (and German-origin) International Renewable Energy Association (IRENA).



Source: Umweltwirtschaftsbericht 2009

Renewable Energy

- Germany has committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels while phasing out nuclear power by 2020 and is deeply committed to the development of renewable energy. Germany is also home to one of the most robust renewable energy industries in the world. The German government's Meseberg plan calls for 25-30% of electricity generation to come from renewable sources by 2020 and the Obama Administration has called for 25% by 2025.

- Germany's renewable energy law (EEG) allows priority grid access and preferential tariffs to customers with renewable energy sources and is one of the main driving forces for Germany's renewable energy industry. Germany was instrumental in the founding of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and will be host to the IRENA Innovation Center in Bonn.

Wind Energy

- Wind is an important renewable energy source for both Germany and the U.S., which are two of the largest consumers of wind energy in the world. German and American companies have extensive ties in the wind energy sector.

- As of the end of 2008, the total installed German capacity for electricity generation from wind was 23.9 GW. Only the U.S. has a higher capacity with 25.2 GW.

- In 2008, the U.S. government committed $50 million for wind R&D and plans to spend $53 million in 2009. The German government has committed €50 million over five years for offshore wind research and development at its Alpha Ventus wind power site in the North Sea.

- U.S. private equity firm Blackstone is committed to investing over €1 billion ($1.57 billion) in the Meerwind project, a wind power site in the North Sea. The 80 windmill, 400MW project is led by Berlin-based Windland Energieerzeugungs GmbH and is scheduled for completion in 2012.

- Siemens operates a Wind Turbine Research Center in Boulder, CO that employs 50 people. Siemens' Energy and Automation Division, which manufactures mechanical drives for wind turbines, plans to build a plant in Illinois that will create 350 new jobs.

- In July 2009, German wind turbine maker Nordex began building a plant in Jonesboro, Arkansas. The investment of $100 million will create 700 new jobs, stimulating the local economy.

- General Electric's European Renewable Energy Center of Excellence in Salzbergen employs over 1,000 workers producing wind turbines for the European market.

- The world's largest wind energy trade fair takes place in Husum, Germany and is attended by many American companies, including General Compression and KR Windpower.

Solar Energy

- Solar energy is also an important part of the German and U.S. renewable energy sector. Germany is a world leader in photovoltaic and concentrated solar power research. Both governments provide financial support for solar development and research. Through its Solar America Initiative, the U.S. government has already awarded over $340 million for industry R&D projects for photovoltaic cells.

- SolarWorld AG, a German company, operates the US' largest solar plant in Hillsboro, Oregon.

- Wacker Chemie AG of Munich announced in February 2009 that it would build a $1 billion facility to produce polycrystalline silicon, a primary component in photovoltaic cells, in Charleston Tennessee.

- The German firm Schott Solar supplied the majority of the solar receivers for Nevada Solar One, the third largest concentrated solar power plant in the world.

- In 2008, General Electric expanded its renewable energy manufacturing facility in Salzbergen to include solar manufacturing.

- US-based First Solar, which is among the world's largest thin film producers, operates a solar module plant in Frankfurt an der Oder that employs over 500 people.

- The Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Fraunhofer Society operates a joint research center focused on significantly reducing the cost of solar energy over the next five years. The MIT-Fraunhofer Center for Sustainable Energy Systems will develop cutting-edge technologies and materials for designing and producing better solar modules.

- In May 2008, San Francisco hosted the fourth annual Germany California Solar Day, an energetic exchange between U.S. and German experts and executives of the latest knowledge and trends in solar research.

- Intersolar trade shows, in both Europe and North America, attract hundreds of businesses annually from both sides of the Atlantic. The Intersolar trade show is based in Munich and is the biggest solar trade show in the world. San Francisco's Intersolar North America is the largest solar trade show in America.